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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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THE evolution of the God-Idea proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear but a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch! Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even freethinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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A U M

Along the path of the true student is sadness, but also there is great joy and hope.
—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLVI March, 1958 No. 5

THE CURRENT OF MIND

THE launching of the Theosophical Movement by H. P. Blavatsky in the last quarter of the last century has had many characterizations, but it is probably most apt to say that she opened the mind of the West to a power of thought and set going a current of mind which was destined to gather momentum as the cycle grew. Access to the meaning of what H.P.B. stood for and sought to accomplish is possible only through the mind. The literature of Theosophy which she gave to the world constitutes a gigantic flow of thought, an intrusion upon the materialism and complacency of the age which gains its energy from the minds of those for whom the light of Theosophy has become a vivid illumination.

The power of the Theosophical Movement is self-generated. The life of Theosophy is essentially the life of the mind. Its inspiration is continually renewed by the enthusiasm of discovery. In time, as the Movement gathers strength through the minds of those who come to reckon all meanings in Theosophical terms, its influence will become a broad swiftly flowing stream of thought and inquiry. It is toward this day that the Theosophic dream of a better world for all is directed.

The example for this sort of understanding of the Theosophical Movement was set by William Q. Judge. From him we have accounts of the great sweep of the current of thought established in the world by H.P.B. He writes of the scope and power of the Theosophical philosophy in his articles in the *Path*—pre-eminently in "The Synthesis of Occult Science"—and in many of the communications printed in *Letters That Have Helped Me*. Judge, as colleague and helper of H.P.B., could

contribute to the literature of the Movement what she could not. He could stand as a witness to her achievements, and be their interpreter. He wrote:

> The scope and bearing of philosophy itself are hardly appreciated by modern thought, because of its materialistic tendency. A complete science of metaphysics and a complete philosophy of science are not yet conceived of as possible; hence the ancient wisdom by its vastness has escaped recognition in modern times. That the authors of ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day "sense-perception" is to us inconceivable, and yet such is the fact; and why should the modern advocate of evolution be shocked and staggered by such a disclosure? It but justifies his hypothesis and extends his theatre. Is it because the present custodians of this ancient learning do not scramble for recognition on the stock exchange, and enter into competition in the marts of the world?

Judge did not avoid the full implications of the Theosophic philosophy. On the contrary, he pressed them to the limit, declaring to all Theosophists the full measure of their responsibility and opportunity. With Judge on the scene, it was not possible for any attentive member of the Society to fall back into the "jog-trot" of ordinary life. A great thing had happened in the world. A powerful torrent of ideas had been set loose. H. P. Blavatsky was their source and Judge was their herald. Now, with the keys to knowledge available, the hour of individual responsibility had struck, and Judge's role was to make that responsibility inescapably known. As he wrote in the *Path,* ". . . in this curve of the cycle, the final authority is *the man himself*":

> Our belief may be summed up in the motto of the Theosophical Society, "There is no religion higher than Truth," and our practice consists in a disregard of any authority in matters of religion and philosophy except such propositions as from their innate quality we feel to be true.

In a letter to a household of English Theosophists, Mr. Judge offered another perspective on the present cycle, affirming that the Theosophical Movement represents something of wider significance than a merely human effort, or a dramatic event in the affairs of the world. It is a phase, he points out, of the larger evolution of the planet, or of the intelligence which is the planet's real being:

> What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyan Chohans did in the transition point—the midway point in

> evolution—at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the impulse for the new types, which resulted later in all the vast varieties of nature. In mental development we are now at the same point; and what we now do in faith and hope for others, and for ourselves, will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. Thus in other centuries we will come out again and go on with it. If we neglect it now, so much the worse for us then. Hence we are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race. . . . Concretely, there is a certain object for our general work. It is to start up a new force, a new current in the world, whereby great and long-gone Gnanis, or wise ones, will be attracted back to incarnate among men here and there, and thus bring back the true life and the true practices. . . .

Why, some may wonder, is it necessary to bring in matters which seem so remote from ordinary human experiences? Why tax the credulity of skeptics and invite the disdain of the sophisticated?

The answer is very simple. Without the conviction which reaches down into the very bowels of our being, we shall not have the strength, the absolute commitment, to do the work of the Theosophical Movement, to press it forward in the world with our last ounce of energy. The persuasions of speculative ethics, or even of rigorously logical transcendental metaphysics, are just not enough. It takes the *science* of Theosophy—the actual dynamics, that is, of human evolution, as found in the *Secret Doctrine* teachings—to make these ideas as important as the air we breathe, the food we eat.

From Judge we have words which drive this realization home. He lived the kind of life that all must live, some day. He was a warm-hearted human being *and* a man who lived in the current of thought set going by H.P.B. From Judge we get a sense of the power of that current and the importance of adding our strength to its flow. Judge is a living example of the orientation of a determined mind to the far-reaching purposes and intimate processes of the Theosophical Movement. He dealt with essentials, letting smaller matters go. What one man could lift, he lifted, and what he could not lift, he did not waste his strength over.

Through his eyes, present-day students may gain a vision of a life in consciousness and moral enterprise. As he looked at things, there was nothing else to do except the work of the Movement, and he arrived at this point of view by means which are now available to all.

THE NEGATORS OF SCIENCE

> As for what thou hearest others say, who persuade the many that the soul, when once freed from the body, neither suffers evil nor is conscious, I know that thou art better grounded *in the doctrines received by us from our ancestors* and in the sacred orgies of Dionysos, than to believe them; *for the mystic symbols are well known to us, who belong to the "Brotherhood."*
>
> —PLUTARCH

OF late, Theosophists in general, and the writer of the present paper especially, have been severely taken to task for *disrespect to science.* We are asked what right we have to refuse recognition of infallibility (which implies omniscience) to our modern scholars? How *dare* we, in short, "contemptuously ignore" their most undeniable and "universally accepted theories," etc., etc. This article is written with the intention of giving some reasons for our sceptical attitude.

To begin with, in order to avoid a natural misunderstanding in view of the preceding paragraph, let the reader at once know that the title, "The Negators of Science," applies in nowise to Theosophists. Quite the reverse. By "Science" we here mean ANCIENT WISDOM, while its "Negators" represent *modern materialistic Scientists.* Thus we have once more "the sublime audacity" of, David-like, confronting, with an old-fashioned theosophical sling for our only weapon, the giant Goliath "armed with a coat of mail," and weighing "five thousand shekels of *brass,*" truly. Let the Philistine deny facts, and substitute for them his "working hypotheses": we reject the latter and defend *facts,* "the armies of the one living TRUTH."

The frankness of this plain statement is certain to awake all the sleeping dogs, and to set every parasite of modern science snapping at our editorial heels. "Those wretched Theosophists!" will be the cry. "How long shall they refuse to humble themselves; and how long shall

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NOTE.—This article, one of the last to be written by H. P. Blavatsky, shows her deep penetration of the world of current scientific theory—and her desire to counteract the effect of materialism as far as possible. The first part of the article, which was reprinted in THEOSOPHY for May, 1918, first appeared in *Lucifer* for April, 1891. The second part, reprinted in THEOSOPHY for June, 1918, was left unfinished at the time of H.P.B.'s passing, and first appeared in *Lucifer* for April, 1893.—Editors, THEOSOPHY.

we bear with this evil congregation?" Well, it will certainly take a considerable time to put us down, as more than one experiment has already shown. Very naturally, our confession of faith must provoke the wrath of every sycophant of the mechanical and animalistic theories of the Universe and Man; and the numbers of these sycophants are large, even if not very awe-inspiring. In our cycle of wholesale denial the ranks of the Didymi are daily reinforced by every new-baked materialist and so-called "infidel," who escapes, full of reactive energy, from the narrow fields of church dogmatism. We know the numerical strength of our foes and opponents, and do not underrate it. More: in this present case even some of our best friends may ask, as they have done before now: "*Cui bono?* why not leave our highly respectable, firmly-rooted, official Science, with her scientists and their flunkeys, severely alone?"

Further on it will be shown *why;* when our friends will learn that we have very good reason to act as we do. With the true, genuine man of science, with the earnest, impartial, unprejudiced and truth-loving scholar—of the minority, alas!—we can have no quarrel, and he has all our respect. But to him who, being only a *specialist* in physical sciences—however eminent, matters not—still tries to throw into the scales of public thought his own materialistic views upon metaphysical and psychological questions (a dead letter to him) we have a good deal to say. Nor are we bound by any laws we know of, divine or human, to respect opinions which are held erroneous in our school, only because they are those of so-called authorities in materialistic or agnostic circles. Between *truth* and *fact* (as we understand them) and the working hypotheses of the greatest living physiologists—though they answer to the names of Messrs. Huxley, Claude Bernard, Du Bois Reymond, etc., etc.,—we hope never to hesitate for one instant. If, as Mr. Huxley once declared, soul, immortality and all spiritual things "lie outside of (his) philosophical enquiry" (*Physical Basis of Life*), then, as he has never inquired into these questions, he has no right to offer an opinion. They certainly lie outside the grasp of materialistic physical science, and, what is more important, to use Dr. Paul Gibier's felicitous expression, *outside the luminous zone* of most of our materialistic scientists. These are at liberty to believe in the "*automatic* action of nervous centres" as primal creators of thought; that the phenomena of *will* are only a complicated form of reflex actions, and what not—but we are as much at liberty to deny their statements. They are

specialists—no more. As the author of *Spiritisme et Fakirisme* admirably depicts it, in his latest work:

> A number of persons, extremely enlightened on some special point of science, take upon themselves the right of pronouncing arbitrarily their judgment on all things; are ready to reject everything new which shocks *their* ideas, often for the sole reason that *if it were true they could not remain ignorant of it!* For my part I have often met this kind of self-sufficiency in men whom their knowledge and scientific studies ought to have preserved from such a sad moral infirmity, had they not been *specialists,* holding to their speciality. It is a sign of relative inferiority to believe oneself superior. In truth, the number of intellects afflicted with such gaps (*lacunes*) is larger than is commonly believed. As there are individuals completely refractory to the study of music, of mathematics, etc., so there are others to whom certain areas of thought are closed. Such of these who might have distinguished themselves in . . . medicine or literature, would probably have signally failed in any occupation outside of what I will call their *lucid zone,* by comparison with the action of those reflectors, which, during night, throw their light into a zone of luminous rays, outside of which all is gloomy shadow and uncertainty. Every human being has his own lucid zone, the extension, range and degree of luminosity of which, varies with each individual.
>
> There are things which lie outside the *conceptivity* of certain intellects; they are outside their lucid zone.[1]

This is absolutely true whether applied to the scientist or his profane admirer. And it is to such scientific specialists that we refuse the right to sit in Solomon's seat, in judgment over all those who will not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears. To them we say: We do not ask you to believe as we do, since your *zone* limits you to your specialty; but then do not encroach on the *zones* of other people. And, if you will do so nevertheless, if, after laughing in your moments of honest frankness at your own ignorance; after stating repeatedly, orally and in print, that you, physicists and materialists, know nothing whatever of the ultimate potentialities of matter, nor have you made one step towards solving the mysteries of life and consciousness—you still persist in teaching that all the manifestations of life and intelligence, and the phenomena of the highest mentality, are merely *properties of that matter of which you confess yourselves quite ignorant,*[2] then—you can

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[1] "Analyse des Choses." *Physiologie Transcendentale.* Dr. Paul Gibier, pp. 33, 34.

[2] "In perfect strictness, it is true that chemical investigation can tell us *little* or *nothing* directly of the composition of living matter, and . . . it is also in strictness true, that we KNOW NOTHING about the composition of any body whatever, as it is." (Prof. Huxley.)

hardly escape the charge of *humbugging* the world.[3] The word "humbug" is used here advisedly, in its strictest etymological Websterian meaning, that is, "imposition under fair pretences"—in this case, of science.

Surely it is not expecting too much of such learned and scholarly gentlemen that they should not abuse their ascendency and prestige over people's minds to teach them something they themselves know nothing about; that they should abstain from preaching the limitations of nature, when its most important problems have been, are, and ever will be, insoluble riddles to the materialist! This is no more than asking *simple honesty* from such teachers.

What is it, that constitutes the real man of learning? Is not a true and faithful servant of science (if the latter is accepted as the synonym of truth) he, who besides having mastered general information on all things is ever ready to learn more, because there are things *that he admits he does not know?*[4] A scholar of this description will never hesitate to give up his own theories, whenever he finds them—not clashing with fact and truth, but—merely dubious. For the sake of truth he will remain indifferent to the world's opinion, and that of his colleagues, nor will he attempt to sacrifice the spirit of a doctrine to the dead-letter of a popular belief. Independent of man or party, fearless whether he gets at loggerheads with biblical chronology, theological claims, or the preconceived and in-rooted theories of materialistic science; acting in his researches in an entirely unprejudiced frame of mind, free from personal vanity and pride, he will investigate truth for her own fair sake, not to please this or that faction; nor will he dislocate facts to make them fit in with his own hypothesis, or the professed beliefs of either state religion or official science.

Such is the ideal of a true man of science; and such a one, whenever mistaken—for even a Newton and a Humboldt have made occa-

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[3] This is what the poet laureate of matter, Mr. Tyndall, confesses in his works concerning atomic action: "Through pure excess of complexity . . . the most highly trained intellect, the most refined and disciplined imagination *retires in bewilderment from the contemplation of the problem.* We are struck dumb by an astonishment which no microscope can relieve, doubting not only the power of our instrument, but *even whether we ourselves possess the intellectual elements which will ever enable us to grapple with the ultimate structural energies of nature.*" And yet they do not hesitate to grapple with nature's spiritual and psychic problems—life, intelligence and the highest consciousness —and attribute them all to matter.

[4] And therefore it is not to such that these well-known humorous verses, sung at Oxford, would apply:

I am the master of this college,
And *what I know not is not knowledge.*

sional mistakes—will hasten to publish his error and correct it, and not act as the German naturalist, Haeckel, has done. What the latter did is worth a repetition. In every subsequent edition of his *Pedigree of Man* he has left uncorrected the *sozura* ("unknown to science," Quatrefages tells us), and his *prosimiæ* allied to the *loris,* which he describes as "without marsupial bones, but *with placenta*" (*Ped. of Man,* p. 77), when years ago it has been proved by the anatomical researches of Messrs. "Alphonse Milne, Edwards and Grandidier . . . that the *prosimiæ* of Haeckel have . . . *no placenta*" (Quatrefages, *The Human Species,* p. 110). This is what we, Theosophists, call downright *dishonesty.* For he knows the two creatures he places in the fourteenth and eighteenth stages of his genealogy in the *Pedigree of Man* to be *myths* in nature, and that far from any possibility of their being the direct or indirect ancestors of apes—let alone *man,* "they cannot even be regarded as the ancestors of the zonoplacental mammals" according to Quatrefages. And yet Haeckel palms them off still, on the innocent, and the sycophants of Darwinism, only, as Quatrefages explains, "because the proof of their existence arises *from the necessity of an intermediate type*"!! We fail to see any difference between the pious frauds of Eusebius "for the greater glory of God," and the impious deception of Haeckel for "the greater glory of matter" and—man's dishonour. Both are *forgeries*—and we have a right to denounce both.

The same with regard to other branches of science. A specialist—say a Greek or a Sanskrit scholar, a paleographer, an archæologist, an orientalist of any description—is an "authority" only within the limits of his special science, just as is an electrician or a physicist in theirs. And which of these may be called *infallible* in his conclusions? They have made, and still go on making mistakes, each of their hypotheses being only a surmise, a theory for the time being—and no more. Who would believe today, with Koch's craze upon us, that hardly a few years ago, the greatest authority on pathology in France, the late Professor Vulpian, Doyen of the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, *denied the existence of the tubercular microbe?* When, says Doctor Gibier, (his friend and pupil) M. Bouley laid before the Academy of Sciences a paper on the tubercular bacillus, he was told by Vulpian that "this germ *could not exist,*" for "had it existed it would have been discovered *before* now, having been hunted after for so many years!"[5]

[5] *Analyse des Choses,* etc., Dr. P. Gibier, pp. 213 and 214.

Just in the same way every scientific specialist of whatever description denies the doctrines of Theosophy and its teachings; not that he has ever attempted to study or analyze them, or to discover how much truth there may be in the old sacred science, but simply because it is not modern science that has discovered any of them; and also because, having once strayed away from the main road into the jungles of material speculation, the men of science cannot return back without pulling down the whole edifice after them. But the worst of all is, that the average critic and opponent of the Theosophical doctrines is neither a scientist, nor even a specialist. He is simply a *flunkey* of the scientists in general; a repeating parrot and a mimicking ape of that or another "authority," who makes use of the personal theories and conclusions of some well-known writer, in the hope of breaking our heads with them. Moreover, he identifies himself with the "gods" he serves or patronizes. He is like the Zouave of the Pope's bodyguard who, because he had to beat the drum at every appearance and departure of St. Peter's "Successor," ended by identifying himself with the apostle. So with the self-appointed flunkey of the modern Elohim of Science. He fondly imagines himself "as one of us," and for no more cogent reason than had the Zouave: he, too, beats the big drum for every Oxford or Cambridge Don whose conclusions and personal views do not agree with the teachings of the Occult Doctrine of antiquity.

To devote, however, to these braggarts with tongue or pen one line more than is strictly necessary, would be waste of time. Let them go. They have not even a "zone" of their own, but have to see things through the light of other people's intellectual "zones."

And now to the reason why we have once more the painful duty of challenging and contradicting the scientific views of so many men considered each more or less "eminent," in his special branch of science. Two years ago, the writer promised in the *Secret Doctrine,* Vol. II, p. 798,* a third and even a fourth volume of that work. This third volume (now almost ready) treats of the ancient Mysteries of Initiation, gives sketches—from the esoteric stand-point—of many of the most famous and historically known philosophers and hierophants, (every one of whom is set down by the Scientists as an *impostor*), from the archaic

* Reference is to the Original Edition. In the Third Edition this reference comes on p. 842, but the wording has been unwarrantably changed by the publishers. H.P.B.'s Third and Fourth volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* have in fact not yet been published.—Eds., THEOSOPHY.

down to the Christian era, and traces the teachings of all these sages to one and the same source of all knowledge and science—the esoteric doctrine or WISDOM-RELIGION. No need our saying that from the esoteric and legendary materials used in the forthcoming work, its statements and conclusions differ greatly and often clash irreconcilably with the data given by almost all the English and German Orientalists. There is a tacit agreement among the latter—including even those who are personally inimical to each other—to follow a certain line of policy in the matter of dates;[6] of denial to "adepts" of any transcendental knowledge of any intrinsic value; of the utter rejection of the very existence of *siddhis,* or abnormal spiritual powers in man. In this the Orientalists, even those who are materialists, are the best allies of the clergy and biblical chronology. We need not stop to analyze this strange fact, but such it is.

Now the main point of Volume III of the *Secret Doctrine* is to prove, by tracing and explaining the *blinds* in the works of ancient Indian, Greek, and other philosophers of note, and also in all the ancient Scriptures—the presence of an uninterrupted esoteric allegorical method and symbolism; to show, as far as lawful, that with the keys of interpretation as taught in the Eastern Hindo-Buddhistic Canon of Occultism, the *Upanishads,* the *Puranas,* the *Sutras,* the Epic poems of India and Greece, the Egyptian *Book of the Dead,* the Scandinavian *Eddas,* as well as the Hebrew *Bible,* and even the classical writings of Initiates (such as Plato, among others)—all, from first to last, yield a meaning quite different from their dead letter texts. This is flatly denied by some of the foremost scholars of the day. They have not got the keys, *ergo*—no such keys can exist. According to Dr. Max Müller no pandit of India has ever heard of an esoteric doctrine (*Gupta-Vidya, nota bene*). In his Edinburgh *Lectures* the Professor made almost as cheap of Theosophists and their interpretations, as some learned Shastris—let alone *initiated* Brahmins—make of the learned German philologist himself. On the other hand, Sir Monier Williams undertakes to prove that the Lord Buddha *never taught any esoteric philosophy* (!!), thus giving the lie to all subsequent history, to the Arhat-Patriarchs, who

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[6] Says Prof. A. H. Sayce in his excellent *Preface* to Dr. Schliemann's *Troja*: "The natural tendency of the student of to-day is to post-date rather than to ante-date, and to bring everything down to the latest period that is possible." This is so, and they do it with a vengeance. The same reluctance is felt to admit the antiquity of man, as to allow to the ancient philosopher any knowledge of that which the modern student *does not know.* Conceit and vanity!

converted China and Tibet to Buddhism, and charging with fraud the numerous esoteric schools still existing in China and Tibet.[7] Nor, according to Professor B. Jowett, the Master of Balliol College, is there any esoteric or gnostic element in the Dialogues of Plato, not even in that preeminently occult treatise, the *Timæus*.[8] The Neo-Platonists, such as Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Porphyry, etc., etc., were ignorant, superstitious mystics, who saw a secret meaning where none was meant, and who, Plato heading them, had no idea of real science. In the scholarly appreciation of our modern scientific luminaries, in fact, science (*i.e., knowledge*) was in its infancy in the days of Thales, Pythagoras and even of Plato; while the grossest superstition and "twaddle" reigned in the times of the Indian Rishis. Panini, the greatest grammarian in the world, according to Professor Weber and Max Müller *was unacquainted with the art of writing,* and so also everyone else in India, from Manu to Buddha, even so late as 300 years B.C.

On the other hand, Professor A. H. Sayce, an undeniably great paleographer and Assyriologist, who kindly admits such a thing as an esoteric school and occult symbology among the Accado-Babylonians, nevertheless claims that the Assyriologists have now in their possession all the keys required for the right interpretation of the secret glyphs of the hoary past. Methinks, we know the chief key used by himself and his colleagues: trace every god and hero, whose character is in the least doubtful, to a solar myth, and you have discovered the whole secret; an easier undertaking, you see, than for a "Wizard of the North" to cook an omelette in a gentleman's hat. Finally, in the matter of esoteric symbology and Mysteries, the Orientalists of to-day seem to have forgotten more than the initiated priests of the days of Sargon (3750 years B.C., according to Dr. Sayce) ever knew. Such is the modest claim of the Hibbert Lecturer for 1887.

Thus, as the personal conclusions and claims of the above-named scholars (and of many more) militate against the theosophical teachings, in this generation, at any rate, the laurels of conquest will never be accorded by the majority to the latter. Nevertheless, since truth and fact are on our side, we need not despair, but will simply bide our time. Time is a mighty conjurer; an irresistible leveller of artificially grown

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[7] See Edkin's *Chinese Buddhism,* and read what this missionary, an eminent Chinese scholar who lived long years in China, though himself very prejudiced as a rule, says of the esoteric schools.

[8] See Preface to his translation of *Timæus.*

weeds and parasites, a universal solvent for truth. *Magna est veritas et prevalebit.* Meanwhile, however, the Theosophists cannot allow themselves to be denounced as visionaries, when not "frauds," and it is their duty to remain true to their colours, and to defend their most sacred beliefs. This they can do only by opposing to the prejudiced hypotheses of their opponents, (*a*) the diametrically opposite conclusions of their colleagues—other scientists as eminent *specialists* in the same branches of study as themselves; and (*b*) the true meaning of sundry passages disfigured by these partizans, in the old scriptures and classics. But to do this, we can pay no more regard to these illustrious personages in modern science, than they do to the gods of the "inferior races." Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom or TRUTH is, no more than was a certain tribal deity—"a respecter of persons." We are on the defensive, and have to vindicate that which we know to be implicit truth: hence, for a few editorials to come, we contemplate a series of articles refuting our opponents—however learned.

And now it becomes evident why it is impossible for us to "leave our highly respectable, firmly-rooted official *science* severely alone."

Meanwhile we may close with a few parting words to our readers. *Power belongs to him who knows;* this is a very old axiom; knowledge, or the first step to power, especially that of comprehending the truth, of discerning the real from the false—belongs only to those who place truth above their own petty personalities. Those only who having freed themselves from every prejudice, and conquered their human conceit and selfishness, are ready to accept every and *any* truth—once the latter is undeniable and has been demonstrated to them—those alone, I say, may hope to get at the ultimate knowledge of things. It is useless to search for such among the proud scientists of the day, and it would be folly to expect the aping masses of the profane to turn against their tacitly accepted idols. Therefore it is also useless for a theosophical work of any description to expect justice. Let some unknown MS. of Macaulay, or Sir W. Hamilton, or John Stuart Mill, be printed and issued to-day by the Theosophical Publishing Company, and the reviewers—if any—would proclaim it ungrammatical and *un*-English, misty and illogical. The majority judge of a work according to the respective prejudices of its critics, who in their turn are guided by the popularity or unpopularity of the authors, certainly never by its intrinsic faults or merits. Outside theosophical circles, therefore, the forthcoming volumes of the *Secret Doctrine* are sure to receive at

the hands of the general public a still colder welcome than their two predecessors have found. In our day, as has been proved repeatedly, no statement can hope for a fair trial, or even hearing, unless its arguments run on the lines of legitimate and *accepted* enquiry, remaining strictly within the boundaries of either official, materialistic science, or emotional, orthodox theology.

Our age, reader, is a paradoxical anomaly. It is pre-eminently materialistic, and as pre-eminently pietist, a Janus age, in all truth. Our literature, our modern thought and progress so-called, run on these two parallel lines, so incongruously dissimilar, and yet both so popular and so very "proper" and "respectable," each in its own way. He who presumes to draw a third line, or even a hyphen of reconciliation, so to speak, between the two, has to be fully prepared for the worst. He will have his work mangled by reviewers, who after reading three lines on the first page, two in the middle of the book, and the closing sentence, will proclaim it "unreadable"; it will be mocked by the sycophants of science and church, misquoted by their flunkeys, and rejected even by the pious railway stalls, while the average reader will not even understand its meaning. The still absurd misconceptions in the cultured circles of Society about the teachings of the "Wisdom-religion" (Bodhism), after the admirably clear and scientifically presented explanations of its elementary doctrines by the author of *Esoteric Buddhism,* are a good proof in point. They might serve as a caution even to those amongst us, who, hardened in almost a life-long struggle in the service of our Cause, are neither timid with their pens, nor in the least disconcerted or appalled by the dogmatic assertions of scientific "authorities." And yet they persist in their work, although perfectly aware that, do what they may, neither materialism nor doctrinal pietism will give theosophical philosophy a fair hearing in this age. To the very end, our doctrine will be systematically rejected, our theories denied a place, even in the ranks of those ever-shifting, scientific ephemera—called the "working hypotheses" of our day. To the advocates of the "animalistic" theory, our cosmogenetical and anthropogenetical teachings must be "fairy tales," truly. "How can we," asked one of the champions of the men of science of a friend, "accept the *rigmaroles* of ancient Babus (?!) even if taught in antiquity, once they go in every detail against the conclusions of modern science. . . . As well ask us to replace Darwin by Jack the Giant-Killer!" Quite so; for those who would shirk any moral responsibility it seems certainly

more convenient to accept descent from a common *simian* ancestor, and see a brother in a dumb, tailless baboon, rather than acknowledge the fatherhood of the Pitris, the fair "sons of the gods," or to have to recognize as a brother, a starveling from the slums, or a copper-coloured man of an "inferior" race. "Hold back!" shout in their turn the pietists, "you can never hope to make respectable church-going Christians—*'Esoteric Buddhists'!*"

Nor are we in any way anxious to attempt the metamorphosis; the less so, since the majority of the pious Britishers have already, and of their own free will and choice, become *Exoteric Boothists.*

De gustibus non disputandum.

In our next, we mean to enquire how far Prof. Jowett is right, in his Preface to *Timæus,* in stating that "the fancies of the Neo-Platonists have nothing to do with the interpretation of Plato," and that "the so-called mysticism of Plato is purely Greek, arising out of his imperfect knowledge," not to say ignorance. The learned Master of Balliol denies the use of any esoteric symbology by Plato in his works. We Theosophists maintain it and must try to give our best proofs for the claims preferred.

II

On Authorities in General, and the Authority of Materialists, Especially

In assuming the task of contradicting "authorities" and of occasionally setting at nought the well established opinions and hypotheses of men of Science, it becomes necessary in the face of repeated accusations to define our attitude clearly at the very outset. Though, where the truth of our doctrines is concerned, no criticism and no amount of ridicule can intimidate us, we would nevertheless be sorry to give one more handle to our enemies, as a pretext for an extra slaughter of the innocent; nor would we willingly lead our friends into an unjust suspicion of that to which we are not in the least prepared to plead guilty.

One of such suspicions would naturally be the idea that we must be terribly self-opinionated and conceited. This would be false from A to Z. It does not at all stand to reason that because we contradict eminent professors of Science on certain points, we therefore claim to know more than they do of Science; nor, that we even have the benighted vanity of placing ourselves on the same level as these scholars. Those who would accuse us of this would simply be talking nonsense, for even

to harbour such a thought would be the madness of conceit—and we have never been guilty of this vice. Hence, we declare loudly to all our readers that most of those "authorities" we find fault with, *stand in our own opinion immeasurably higher in scientific knowledge and general information than we do.* But, this conceded, the reader is reminded that great scholarship in no way precludes great bias and prejudice; nor is it a safeguard against personal vanity and pride. A Physicist may be an undeniable expert in acoustics, wave-vibrations, etc., and be no Musician at all, having no ear for music. None of the modern bootmakers can write as Count Leo Tolstoi does; but any tyro in decent shoemaking can take the great novelist to task for spoiling good materials in trying to make boots. Moreover, it is only in the legitimate defence of our time-honoured Theosophical doctrines, opposed by many on the authority of materialistic Scientists, entirely ignorant of psychic possibilities, in the vindication of ancient Wisdom and its Adepts, that we throw down the gauntlet to Modern Science. If in their inconceivable conceit and blind Materialism they will go on dogmatizing upon that about which they know nothing—nor do they want to know—then those who do know something have a right to protest and to say so publicly and in print.

Many must have heard of the suggestive answer made by a lover of Plato to a critic of Thomas Taylor, the translator of the works of this great Sage. Taylor was charged with being but a poor Greek scholar, and not a very good English writer. "True," was the pert reply; "Tom Taylor may have known far less Greek than his critics; but *he knew Plato far better than any of them does.*" And this we take to be our own position.

We claim no scholarship in either dead or living tongues, and we take no stock in Philology as a modern Science. But we do claim to understand the living spirit of Plato's Philosophy, and the symbolical meaning of the writings of this great Initiate, better than do his modern translators, and for this very simple reason. The Hierophants and Initiates of the Mysteries in the Secret Schools in which all the Sciences inaccessible and useless to the masses of the profane were taught, had one universal, Esoteric tongue—the language of symbolism and allegory. This language has suffered neither modification nor amplification from those remote times down to this day. It still exists and is still taught. There are those who have preserved the knowledge of it, and also of the arcane meaning of the Mysteries; and it is from these

Masters that the writer of the present protest had the good fortune of learning, howbeit imperfectly, the said language. Hence her claim to a more correct comprehension of the arcane portion of the ancient texts written by avowed Initiates—such as were Plato and Iamblichus, Pythagoras, and even Plutarch—than can be claimed by, or expected from, those who, knowing nothing whatever of that "language" and even denying its existence altogether, yet set forth authoritative and conclusive views on everything Plato and Pythagoras knew or did not know, believed in or disbelieved. It is not enough to lay down the audacious proposition, "that an ancient Philosopher is to be interpreted from himself (*i.e.,* from the dead-letter texts) and *by the contemporary history of thought*" (Prof. Jowett); he who lays it down has first of all to prove to the satisfaction, not of his admirers and himself alone, but *of all,* that modern thought does not woolgather in the question of Philosophy as it does on the lines of materialistic Science. Modern thought denies Divine Spirit in Nature, and the Divine element in mankind, the Soul's immortality and every noble conception inherent in man.

We all know that in their endeavors to kill that which they have agreed to call "superstition" and the "relics of ignorance" (*read* "religious feelings and metaphysical concepts of the Universe and Man"), Materialists like Prof. Huxley or Mr. Grant Allen are ready to go to any length in order to ensure the triumph of their soul-killing Science. But when we find Greek and Sanskrit scholars and doctors of theology, playing into the hands of modern materialistic thought, pooh-poohing everything *they* do not know, or that of which the public—or rather Society, which ever follows in its impulses the craze of fashion, of popularity or unpopularity—disapproves, then we have the right to assume one of two things: the scholars who act on these lines are either moved by personal conceit, or by fear of public opinion; they dare not challenge it at the risk of unpopularity. In both cases they forfeit their right to esteem as authorities. For, if they are blind to facts and sincere in their blindness, then their learning, however great, will do more harm than good, and if, while fully alive to those universal truths which Antiquity knew better than we do—though it did express them in more ambiguous and less scientific language—our Philosophers will still keep them under the bushel for fear of painfully dazzling the majority's eyes, then the example they set is most pernicious. They suppress the truth and disfigure metaphysical conceptions,

as their colleagues in Physical Science distort facts in material Nature into mere props to support their respective views, on the lines of popular hypotheses and Darwinian thought. And if so, what right have they to demand a respectful hearing from those to whom TRUTH is the highest, as the noblest, of all religions?

The negation of any fact or claim believed in by the teeming millions of Christians and non-Christians, of a fact, moreover, *impossible to disprove,* is a serious thing for a man of recognized scientific authority, in the face of its inevitable results. Denials and rejections of certain things, hitherto held sacred, coming from such sources, are, for a public taught to respect scientific data and *bulls,* as good as unqualified assertions. Unless uttered in the broadest spirit of *Agnosticism* and offered merely as a personal opinion, such a spirit of wholesale negation—especially when confronted with the universal belief of the whole of Antiquity, and of the incalculable hosts of the surviving Eastern nations in the things denied—becomes pregnant with dangers to mankind. Thus the rejection of a Divine Principle in the Universe, of Soul and Spirit in man and of his Immortality, by one set of Scientists; and the repudiation of any Esoteric Philosophy existing in Antiquity, hence, of the presence of any hidden meaning based on that system of revealed learning in the sacred writings of the East (the *Bible* included), or in the works of those Philosophers who were confessedly Initiates, by another set of "authorities"—are simply fatal to humanity. Between missionary enterprise—encouraged far more on political than religious grounds[9] —and scientific Materialism, both teaching from two diametrically opposite poles that which neither can prove or disprove, and mostly that which they themselves take on blind faith or blind hypothesis, the millions of the growing generations must find themselves at sea. They will not know, any more than their parents know now, what to believe in, whither to turn for truth. Weightier proofs are thus required now by many than the mere personal assumptions and negations of religious fanatics and irreligious Materialists, that such or another thing exists or has no existence.

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[9] We maintain that the fabulous sums spent on, and by, Christian missions, whose propaganda brings forth such wretched moral results and gets so few renegades, are spent with a political object in view. The aim of the missions, which, as in India, are only said to be *"tolerated"* (sic) seems to be to *pervert* people from their ancestral religions, rather than to *convert* them to Christianity, and this is done in order to destroy in them every spark of national feeling. When the spirit of patriotism is dead in a nation, it very easily becomes a mere puppet in the hands of the rulers.

We, Theosophists, who are not so easily caught on the hook baited with either salvation or annihilation, we claim our right to demand the weightiest, and to us *undeniable* proofs that truth is in the keeping of Science and Theology. And as we find no answer forthcoming, we claim the right to argue upon every undecided question, by analyzing the assumptions of our opponents. We, who believe in Occultism and the archaic Esoteric Philosophy, do not, as already said, ask our members to believe as we do, nor charge them with ignorance if they do not. We simply leave them to make their choice. Those who decide to study the old Science are given proofs of its existence; and corroborative evidence accumulates and grows in proportion to the personal progress of the student. Why should not the negators of ancient Science—to wit, modern Scholars—do the same in the matter of their denials and assertions; *i.e.,* why don't they refuse to say either *yea* or *nay* in regard to that which they really *do not know,* instead of denying or affirming it *á priori* as they all do? Why do not our Scientists proclaim frankly and honestly to the whole world, that most of their notions—*e.g.,* on life, matter, ether, atoms, etc., each of these being an unsolvable mystery to them—*are not scientific facts and axioms,* but simple "working hypotheses."

Or again, why should not Orientalists—but too many of them are "Reverends"—or a Regius Professor of Greek, a Doctor of Theology, and a translator of Plato, like Professor Jowett, mention, while giving out his personal views on the Greek Sage, that there are other scholars as learned as he is who think otherwise. This would only be fair, and more prudent too, in the face of a whole array of evidence to the contrary, embracing thousands of years in the past. And it would be more honest than to lead less learned people than themselves into grave errors, by allowing those under the hypnotic influence of "authority," and thus but too inclined to take every ephemeral hypothesis on trust, to *accept* as proven that which has *yet* to be proved. But the "authorities" act on different lines. Whenever a fact, in Nature or in History, does not fit in with, and refuses to be wedged into, one of their personal hypotheses, accepted as Religion or Science by the solemn majority, forthwith it is denied, declared a "myth," or, *revealed* Scriptures are appealed to against it.

It is this which brings Theosophy and its Occult doctrines into everlasting conflict with certain Scholars and Theology. Leaving the latter entirely out of question in the present article, we will devote our pro-

test, for the time being, but to the former. So, for instance, many of our teachings—corroborated in a mass of ancient works, but denied piecemeal, at various times, by sundry professors—have been shown to clash not only with the conclusions of modern Science and Philosophy, but even with those passages from the old works to which we have appealed for evidence. We have but to point to a certain page of some old Hindu work, to Plato, or some other Greek classic, as corroborating some of our peculiar Esoteric doctrines, to see—

—H.P.B.

Plato on The Soul

Yes, replied Socrates, if the Soul is really immortal, what care should be taken of her, not only in respect of the portion of time which is called life, but of eternity! And the danger of neglecting her from this point of view does indeed appear to be awful. If death had only been the end of all, the wicked would have had a good bargain in dying, for they would have been happily quit not only of their body, but of their own evil together with their souls. But now, inasmuch as the soul is manifestly immortal, there is no release or salvation from evil except the attainment of the highest virtue and wisdom. . . . A man of sense ought not to say, nor will I be very confident, that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason why I lengthen out the tale. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who having cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and working harm rather than good, has sought after the pleasures of knowledge; and has arrayed the soul, not in some foreign attire, but in her own proper jewels, temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth—in these adorned she is ready to go on her journey.

—Plato

NOTES ON THE TAO TE KING

THE last section of Lionel Giles' rendition of the *Tao Te King,* titled "Lao Tzu on Himself," offers opportunity for review of ideas found throughout the text. Let us consider the first three sentences of this chapter:

> Alas! the barrenness of the age has not yet reached its limit.
>
> All men are radiant with happiness, as if enjoying a great feast, as if mounted on a tower in spring. I alone am still, and give as yet no sign of joy.

The "barrenness of the age" is obviously a barrenness of spiritual perception. Lao Tzu is not in the least interested as to whether the kingdom is prospering in terms of material advantages and military security. Nor does he feel that "reform" maneuverings at the political level will draw men any closer to perception of Tao. Kali Yuga, in other words, has yet to run its course, and will be transcended, during that period, only by individuals—never by governments, however well-intentioned. The masses will be "radiant with happiness" on a false basis only, and that happiness shall always prove itself to be ephemeral. But Lao Tzu is not *against* radiant happiness, per se, for he remarks that he is able to "give as *yet* no sign of joy." In other words, the lonely vigil is deliberately chosen by Lao Tzu, but only because circumstances would make any other position destructive of his integrity. His happiness lies in whatever of clear seeing he has been able to attain, a "seed beneath the snow," holding forth the promise of a Spring that may one day be shared with others:

> Lonely though I am and unlike other men, yet I revere the Foster-Mother, Tao.
>
> My words are very easy to understand, very easy to put into practice; yet the world can neither understand nor practise them.
>
> My words have a clue, my actions have an underlying principle. It is because men do not know the clue that they understand me not.
>
> Those who know me are but few, and on that account my honour is the greater.
>
> Thus the Sage wears coarse garments, but carries a jewel in his bosom.

In "Miscellaneous Sayings" we again see indication that Lao Tzu is not insensitive to the promise of a brighter morrow, as in his remarks that "to see small beginnings is clearness of sight." And it is in this light that we encounter further encouragement:

> The tree which needs two arms to span its girth sprang from the tiniest shoot. Yon tower, nine storeys high, rose from a little mound of earth. A journey of a thousand miles began with a single step.

Another point of emphasis is illuminated by Lao Tzu's affirmation that every man has a "natural clearness of sight" which he must bring forth by purification of his ambitions:

> Use the light that is in you to revert to your natural clearness of sight. Then the loss of the body is unattended by calamity. This is called doubly enduring.

The Tao is in the heart of each man, and it is the only "Mother" to which he can turn for unfailing assistance. Tao is, itself, the secret of life, and it dwells within the mind and heart of the self-governed Sage. Such a man possesses not only the rarest of spiritual gifts—he may also travel anywhere in thought or body without loss of equilibrium, for, as it occurs in a passage from the *Dhammapada,* "he whose hand has no wound may touch poison. Poison harms not one who has no wound. No evil is to him who does no evil." Lao Tzu expresses the same thought in this fashion:

> I have heard that he who possesses the secret of life, when travelling abroad, will not flee from rhinoceros or tiger; when entering a hostile camp, he will not equip himself with sword or buckler. The rhinoceros finds in him no place to insert its horn; the tiger has nowhere to fasten its claw, the soldier has nowhere to thrust his blade. And why? Because he has no spot where death can enter.

This last paragraph, with its simple imagery, is a reminder of Lao Tzu's capacity to teach at many different levels at the same time. Comment upon this aspect of Taoism, showing how Lao Tzu leads to a view of the "doubly enduring," is provided by Holmes Welch:

> Although Taoism becomes easier to practice as we approach its mysteries, it does not insist that we approach them. That is why the *Tao Te Ching* was written in levels, to yield a little or a great deal, depending on the needs of the reader. To the reader unprepared for inner experience, it offers practical advice, which, to the extent that he is able to take it, will help him. For the reader with mystical inclinations it points a way which he can follow as far as he may wish. But to all men it offers a degree of comfort—a cold comfort, it is true, not like the comfort of prayer to a merciful God who may, if he chooses, suspend the order of the universe for the sake of a single penitent. Tao can never be suspended. Dark, infinite, and unchanging, it is something a man can depend on to the end of his days. Rationally, intuitively, he can know it, accept it, and bring himself into

> harmony with it, and mystically he can penetrate to something darker behind it. At each step his comfort will grow, until at the last he feels that "mysterious power" which all of us need to feel, confronted by the hostile immensity of the universe. There is little that we cannot face then.

Mr. Welch's reminder that Lao Tzu "does not insist" that we approach the mysteries of life is a necessary one. Lao Tzu intended no religion, and though Taoism has been an enlightening influence, its "organized" expressions leave much to be desired. Mr. Welch continues:

> It might be said that to the extent Tao is considered divine, the metaphysics becomes a theology and Taoism a religion. In that case it is a very curious religion. It is not based on faith, but on direct experience of God. It has no place for ritual or priests or church. It promises no response to prayer while we are in this world, and as to the next world, that does not exist—unless it be the state of non-being, which does not sound particularly lively. It vigorously attacks morality and government—two institutions that religion generally supports. And most curious of all, the mystical experience it offers is not ecstatic, but dark, neutral, and uncertain.
>
> For these reasons Taoism as a religion was no success at all. Or rather the highly successful religion which came to be called Taoism has almost nothing to do with the *Tao Te Ching*.

Those who feel that Lao Tzu oversimplifies life's problems by his suggestion that only the quiescence of the Tao provides the deepest fulfillment, may need to notice that this emphasis is but the "other half" of the teacher's paradoxical instructions. For Lao Tzu has also pointed out that "he who always thinks things easy is sure to find them difficult. Therefore the Sage ever anticipates difficulties, and thus it is he never encounters them." The vision of the Tao, in other words, is not meant to provide an escape from difficulties, but only an escape from the delusions which usually accompany them. By throwing the pupil back upon himself, Lao Tzu ensures, as much as a teacher can, *against* the dangers of oversimplification. The concept underlying "Tao" is so subtle to the material man that he can find no solace in its "worship." Tao provides only for those who, selflessly and impersonally, give a portion of themselves in dedication to the sacredness of all life.

We close with a comment from Lin Yutang in his introduction to the *Wisdom of Laotse,* wherein he points out that leading thinkers of

our time are gradually approaching the Taoist view—by deserting the complications of formal religion:

> Let me quote Einstein's notable words: "It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity; to reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe, which we can dimly perceive, and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifested in nature."
>
> It seems that the great truths of the world have been seen by the wise men of all ages, regardless of country and period. Dr. Millikan, Einstein, Eddington, Emerson, Laotse and Chuangtse, with different backgrounds and possessing different tools of knowledge, come back to nearly the same thing. The preceding statement of belief is, I believe, acceptable to most thinking modern men. But the ideas are characteristically Taoist: "It is enough for me to contemplate, etc.," "the *intelligence manifested in nature,*" "which we can *dimly* perceive." Emerson, too, says he was a part of "God in nature."
>
> What Emerson wrote a hundred years ago is still true today. "We have the same need to command a view of the religion of the world." And Laotse adds, "He who does not think so—his door of divine intelligence is shut."

The Inexhaustible Voice

I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past.

—William Faulkner

SYMBOLISM

> The great archaic system known from prehistoric ages as the sacred Wisdom Science, one that is contained and can be traced in every old as well as in every new religion, had, and still has, its universal language, the language of the Hierophants, which has seven "dialects," so to speak, each referring, and being especially appropriated, to one of the seven mysteries of Nature. Each had its own symbolism. Nature could thus be either read in its fulness, or viewed from one of its special aspects.
>
> —*The Secret Doctrine* I, 310

H P. BLAVATSKY'S *Secret Doctrine* reiterates the importance of the study of the science of symbols. Symbolism is the language of the Soul, the one universal language, transcending all limitations of sex, caste, creed, color, and race. Like the babe, the soul has its period of infancy during which it cannot understand nor express the language of its own native land. Hearing its elders speak, the soul learns symbol after symbol—first by mere rote, then gradually it learns to read ideographs, to draw emblems, and to understand logograms.

Just as all languages are founded on sound-forms, so also the different types of symbols—allegorical, emblematical, hieroglyphical, mythical, parabolical—are based on the soul-sounds which make up the Archaic Esoteric Science. The soul in learning and expressing its own language often blunders; so we have grey-magic, or half-true symbols. There are also corrupters of soul-language who invent abuses, such as curses. Only black magicians, or potential ones, deliberately use soul-words, spiritual symbols, for base, destructive purposes, in crass selfishness. The same words may be used to bless as to blaspheme, in temples and by church-goers; out of the same language come curses, and words as compassionaters.

Symbols are a manifested sound-scale; words are sound-forms. Soul-symbols make the basic language in which all truths of soul-knowledge find complete expression. The real Secret Doctrine is a volume of Idea-Forms, the result of contemplation, of union (yoga) with the processes of Divine Mind. Those great of soul whose attention was fixed on eternal verities wrote the Book of Dhyan, or Dzyan, the pri-

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meval and everlasting source of all true instruction. The Book of Nature was read with one-pointed attention and translated in Archaic Symbols of sound, number, and color—the three combining to become a form. Vowels and consonants, odd and even numbers, white and black shades are the Spirit-Matter, Purusha-Prakriti, working respectively in sound, number, and color.

Sounds, numbers, colors are formless, *arupa;* the forms, *rupas,* which their combined action produces, are archetypal. There is the birth of *Nama*—Name. Individualities with Name and Form begin to function on the fourth, the middle plane, unfolding the powers of sound, of number, and of color inherent in them, and thus ultimately come into being the objects of the material universe. Force-forms, pure, creative and radiant—they are designated Devas, Dhyan Chohans, Archangels, Gods, Patriarchs, whose very names are Powers. The life-story of these Power-Names, is the Esoteric Wisdom Religion. Theosophy is Wisdom about these Gods, whose Form is material fashioned out of the essence of sounds, colors, and numbers, the forces of life, or consciousness. These God-Forms are Lives, divine and pure, at the apex of evolution, and collectively the One Life, or Deity. Every entity in the universe is a God-Form on the plane of subjectivity, while in the objective world but a composite reflection of that form, its forces and powers.

At the present stage of evolution the human race has reached the condition symbolized in the building of the Tower of Babel. A confusion of noises is heard, and knowledge is unreal because an untrue evaluation of the Archaic Symbols passes current. Theologies have been the first great offenders in anthropomorphizing Divine and Impersonal symbols; Science followed by materializing them. The *hoi polloi* have carnalized them. Our present-day knowledge deals only with a universe of objects, and understanding is sought only of things sensed. Our senses are the primary, basic source of instruction, the mind itself being used almost solely in relation to impressions received and the sensations which they cause. Deductions thus drawn and subsequent conclusions arrived at prove false with the advent of a new sense-impression, or because of the irreconcilable nature of the deductions themselves.

The knowledge of objects is the knowledge of particulars detached from their universal aspect. The study of the physical body only cannot unveil the hidden forces and temperament of a single personality,

any more than the examination of a single personality could tell the long life-story of the Ego whose present masque it is. The Ego is but the womb of innumerable personalities all of which we could come to know, for in every sense knowledge of the universals leads to unmistakable and infallible knowledge of all particulars. Archaic and esoteric symbols are the symbols of universal ideas.

> To some extent, it is admitted that even the esoteric teaching is allegorical. To make the teaching comprehensible to the average intelligence, requires the use of symbols cast in an intelligible form. Hence the allegorical and semi-mythical narratives in the exoteric, and the (only) *semi*-metaphysical and objective representations in the esoteric teachings. For the purely and transcendentally spiritual conceptions are adapted only to the perceptions of those who "see without eyes, hear without ears, and sense without organs," according to the graphic expression of the Commentary. (*S.D.* II, 81.)
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> The ancients knew these powers so well, that, while concealing their true nature under various allegories, for the benefit (or to the detriment) of the uneducated rabble, they never departed from the multiple object in view while inverting them. They contrived to throw a thick veil over the nucleus of truth concealed by the symbol, but they ever tried to preserve the latter as a *record* for future generations, sufficiently transparent to allow their wise men to discern that truth behind the fabulous form of the glyph or allegory. (*S.D.* I, 466.)
>
> There is more wisdom concealed under the exoteric *fables* of Puranas and Bible than in all the exoteric *facts* and science in the literature of the world, and more OCCULT true Science, than there is of exact knowledge in all the academies. Or, in plainer and stronger language, there is as much esoteric wisdom in some portions of the *exoteric* Puranas and Pentateuch, as there is of nonsense and of designed childish fancy in it, when read only in the dead-letter murderous interpretations of great dogmatic religions, and especially of sects. (*S.D.* I, 336.)

The Secret Doctrine points out many a misconceived symbol, and "correcting the unavoidable exaggerations of popular fancy, gives the facts as they are recorded in the Archaic symbols." (*S.D.* II, 96.) Further, H.P.B.'s teaching is that "every symbol must yield three fundamental truths and four implied ones, otherwise the symbol is false." The clue to the study of symbols is given in the following (*S.D.* II, 335):

> The comprehension of the Occult Doctrine is based on that of the seven sciences; which sciences find their expression in the seven different applications of the secret records of the exoteric texts. Thus we

have to deal with modes of thought on seven entirely different planes of Ideality. Every text relates to, and has to be rendered from, one of the following standpoints—

1. The Realistic plane of thought;
2. The Idealistic;
3. The purely Divine or Spiritual.

The student is advised to commence with the symbols of cosmic and universal facts ere going to those of human evolution and the world of particulars. Anthropogenesis is especially difficult to understand without some preparatory acquaintance with metaphysical symbols. The student must needs begin with universals, if he would not get lost in the heterogeneous processes of learning. He has to master what he is taught, and at the same time, a certain detachment from the very teachings is necessary, that he may know what is good and necessary for *himself* to *at*tach, or apply.

The Lotus Symbol

The Lotus, or Padma, is a very ancient and favorite simile for the Kosmos itself, and also for man. The popular reasons given are, firstly, that the Lotus-seed contains within itself a perfect miniature of the future plant, which typifies the fact that the spiritual prototypes of all things exist in the immaterial world before those things become materialised on Earth. Secondly, the fact that the Lotus plant grows up through the water, having its root in the Ilus, or mud, and spreading its flower in the air above. The Lotus thus typifies the life of man and also that of the Kosmos; for the Secret Doctrine teaches that the elements of both are the same, and that both are developing in the same direction. The root of the Lotus sunk in the mud represents material life, the stalk passing up through the water typifies existence in the astral world, and the flower floating on the water and opening to the sky is emblematical of spiritual being.

—H. P. Blavatsky

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

PEOPLE do not want to be associated with those who are basically stupid about important issues. They may tolerate stupidity in a "magnanimous" sense, but they are still impatient, and do not wish to be closely identified with people who are obtuse. If a person is quite selfish, but clever or "sharp," and intelligent, one finds one feels a certain twinge of respect in spite of a feeling of criticism for the self-centeredness. But if a person just does not see very many hues and dimensions in life, he is really never accepted. What is it in man's nature that makes him so impatient with "stupidity," or, better termed, obtuseness?

It is usually a combination of a haste for one's own advancement plus feelings of one's own inadequacy which leads to annoyance with others.

On the other hand, Buddha, in the *Dhammapada,* advises: "Do not consort with fools." If one with whom we are associated does not focus, is unable to see what seem to us basic truths, or enough dimensions in any given situation, he cannot really offer much in the way of broadening one's horizons of values, the meaning of truth, etc. Conversely, though, one who sees more in life than we do, and also accepts full responsibility for his own action, quite often places a strain on the one who does not see or feel so keenly.

The "adventure" tied up with exposure to broad avenues of perception is extremely attractive to the newcomer, at first, and "fools rush in." But responsibility and striving must go along with this advantage, which is frequently *not* perceived. Therefore, one who is not by nature keenly attuned to subtle tones of thinking and living might very well find himself attracted by this new approach to life, yet quite soon feel "out on a limb," unable to cope, identify, and relate his thinking with himself and where he is actually living. This is foolish, but the person is not necessarily a fool. He needs encouragement. Otherwise he may turn to blaming or criticizing the one who introduced all the new and confusing issues.

It is easy to feel that an individual of poor thinking and perceiving powers is unable to enjoy mutual appreciation of anything—acts as a drag, is someone always to be looked out for, etc. Yet no one is devoid

of feelings of inadequacy, or fears that maybe he too is not as "smart" or perceptive as he might be. This deep-seated feeling shows itself in various ways, depending on the personality of the individual. But since it is almost invariably present in some form or another, it is unsettling to be reminded of this "imperfectness" of one's own nature by another's "stupid" attitude and thoughts. If one has this fear, and is constantly reminded of the possibility of its manifesting in himself —as he is a human being, too—he will find it difficult to tolerate the obtuseness, in some matters, of another.

People always appreciate clever insights, perceptive thoughts often encountered through the medium of the arts. G. Bernard Shaw, for example, depicts this ability quite adeptly. Since we do have this capacity to appreciate clever, intelligent insights through the written word, it would follow that we would also seek this type of companionship, or rather prefer it by far to that offered by the dull person. But we can often *learn* more from a person of no brilliance, with whom we are directly associated under karma, than from someone like Shaw.

The term Soul *seems to be used by Theosophists with many and vague meanings. What does this word actually mean in Theosophical terminology?*

(*a*) A. P. Sinnett defines *soul* in three different ways in his *Esoteric Buddhism*: the Animal Soul (*Kama-rupa,* the seat of animal desires and passions), the Human Soul (*Manas*—a dual principle in its functions, a description of Soul which lends itself to the picture of the constant battle in man to choose between good and evil), and the Spiritual Soul (*Atma-Buddhi*). Theosophists probably use the word Soul in each of these contexts at different times, or may mean a combination of some two of them or some further refinement. When they do, it is important that they specify which definition they are using, in the interests of clarifying their own thought and the understanding of others. Approximate conceptions of key words like this one make for the growth of "of course" words like the so-called "of course" virtues of our culture: they remain unexamined and misty.

One of the tasks of the Theosophical student is to "make clean and clear his conceptions and perceptions." *Soul* is used by people in so many ways that it is important to show the difference between it and similar words, and, in the process, to define some of the words which describe it—in order to limit the field somewhat.

In Theosophical teachings, *Spirit* is applied to that which belongs directly to Universal Consciousness, and which is its homogeneous and unadulterated emanation. The seventh principle, Atma (the ray from the Absolute Being), and the sixth, Buddhi (spiritual discernment) qualify. Thus, the higher *Manas* in man is, when linked indissolubly with Buddhi, a Spiritual Being.

The Ego, or Self, is defined as the consciousness in man which makes possible the feeling of "I-am-ship." Esoteric philosophy, explains H.P.B., teaches the existence of two Egos in man, the Mortal or Personal, and the Higher, Divine and Impersonal—calling the former "Personality" and the latter "Individuality."

The *Glossary* says that the term Soul—human or animal (lower *manas* acting in animals as instinct)—is applied only to *Kama-Manas,* and is qualified as the "living" soul. It includes the vital principle, or breath of life, which every animal down to the most minute forms shares with man. (The latter is called *Nephesh* by the Hebrew Bible and Prana in Theosophical terminology.) The Soul, then, is not immortal, if by *Soul* you mean the personal Ego or life-Soul (Nephesh). This explanation is the only definitive one given in the *Glossary.*

(*b*) It was said by a Theosophy School teacher recently, when discussing Plato's philosophy, and specifically in regard to a definition of "soul," that Plato had three categories for "beings in motion." They are: that which moves only when influenced by something external and directional; that which moves sometimes of its own volition and sometimes through the influence and push of external causes; and that which *moves itself* constantly. The first category might be referred to the lower forms of physical life; the second could be likened to the human being involved in evolution; the third *is the soul,* that which moves itself, "the self moving unit."

The soul might be thought of, from one standpoint, as the composite of all experience and knowledge gleaned through reincarnations during evolutionary pilgrimage. It is the permanent part of man, which travels through lives, unaffected save for the insights which evolve the higher individuality. But the soul must also be considered in H.P.B.'s words of the Third Proposition in the S.D. as an "identity with the Universal Over-Soul," the latter "an aspect of the Unknown Root."

SOME WORDS ON THE MYSTERIES

THE reason why in every age so little has been generally known of the mysteries of initiation, is twofold. The first has already been explained by more than one author, and lies in the terrible penalty following the least indiscretion. The second is the superhuman difficulties and even dangers which the daring candidate of old had to encounter, and either conquer, or die in the attempt, when, what is still worse, he did not lose his reason. There was no real danger to him whose mind had become thoroughly spiritualized, and so prepared for every terrific sight. He who fully recognized the power of his immortal spirit and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, had naught to fear. But woe to the candidate in whom the slightest physical fear—sickly child of matter—made him lose sight of and faith in his own invulnerability. He who was not wholly confident of his moral fitness to accept the burden of these tremendous secrets—was doomed.

The term Initiation comes from the Latin *initia,* which means the basic or first principles of any Science. It was practiced in every old national religion. This practice of initiation or admission into the sacred Mysteries was taught by the Hierophants and learned priests of the Temples, and is one of the most ancient customs. In Europe it was abolished only with the fall of the last pagan temple. The Hierophant—a title belonging to the highest Adepts in the temples of antiquity—was the teacher and expounder of the Mysteries and the *Initiator* into the final great Mysteries. He represented the Demiurge, and explained to the postulants for Initiation the various phenomena of Creation that were produced for their tuition. "It was forbidden even to pronounce the name of the Hierophant before an uninitiated person. He sat in the East, and wore as a symbol of authority a golden globe suspended from the neck. He was also called *Mystagogus.*" In Hebrew and Chaldaic the term was *Peter,* the opener, discloser; hence the Pope as the successor to the hierophant of the ancient Mysteries, sits in the Pagan chair of St. Peter.

In the palmy days of old, the Mysteries, according to the greatest Greek and Roman philosophers, were the most sacred of all solemnities as well as the most beneficent, and greatly promoted virtue. They

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NOTE.—Collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky.

represented the passage from mortal life into finite death, and the experiences of the disembodied Spirit and Soul in the world of subjectivity. In our own day, as the secret is lost, the candidate passes through sundry meaningless ceremonies and is initiated into the solar allegory of Hiram Abiff, the "Widow's Son." We are told also why the sublimer scenes in the Mysteries were always in the night. The life of the interior spirit is the death of the external nature; and the night of the physical world denotes the day of the spiritual. Dionysus, the night-sun, is therefore worshipped rather than Helios, orb of day. In the Mysteries were symbolized the pre-existent condition of the spirit and soul, and the lapse of the latter into earth-life and Hades, the miseries of that after life, the purification of the soul, and its relation to divine bliss or reunion with spirit.

If we believe in tradition at all, we have to credit the story that from the intermarrying of the progeny of the hierophants of the sacred island and the descendants of the Atlantean Noah, sprang up a mixed race of righteous and wicked. On the one side the world had its Enochs, Moseses, Gautama-Buddhas, its numerous "Saviours," and the great hierophants. On the other hand, its *"natural"* magicians who, through lack of the restraining power of proper spiritual enlightenment, and because of the weakness of physical and mental organizations, unintentionally perverted their gifts to evil purposes. Moses had no word of rebuke for those adepts in prophecy and other powers who had been instructed in the colleges of esoteric wisdom mentioned in the Bible. His denunciations were reserved for such as either unwittingly or otherwise debased the powers inherited from their Atlantean ancestors to the service of evil spirits, to the injury of humanity. His wrath was kindled against the spirit of *Ob,* not that of *OD.*

Have the Western Orientalists tried to find out the connection between all the "Dragons" and "Serpents" of antiquity? Between the "powers of Evil" in the cycles of epic legends, the Persian and the Indian, the Greek and the Jewish? Between the contests of Indra and the giant; the Aryan Nagas and the Iranian Aji Dahaka; the Guatemalan Dragon and the Serpent of Genesis, etc., etc.? Thus the *Involute,* the hidden or shrouded gods, the *Consentes, Complices,* and *Novensiles,* are all disguised relics of the Atlanteans. The *Thevetatas* —the evil, mischievous gods that have survived in the Etruscan Pantheon—are mentioned in Hindu works along with the "sons of God" or Brahman Pitris. The Etruscan arts of soothsaying, their *Disciplina*

revealed by Tages, comes direct and in undisguised form from the Atlantean king Thevetat, the "invisible" Dragon, whose name survives to this day among the Siamese and Burmese, as also in the Jataka allegorical stories of the Buddhists as the opposing power under the name of *Devadat.*

The class of hierophants was divided into two distinct categories; those who were instructed by the "Sons of God" of the Island, and who were initiated in the divine doctrine of pure revelation, and others who inhabited the lost Atlantis, if such must be its name—and who, being of another race, were born with a sight which embraced all hidden things, and was independent of both distance and material obstacle. In short, they were the *fourth* race of men mentioned in the *Popol-Vuh,* "whose sight was unlimited and who knew all things at once." They were, perhaps, what we would now term "natural-born mediums," who neither struggled nor suffered to obtain their knowledge, nor did they acquire it at the price of sacrifice. Therefore, while the former walked in the path of their divine instructors, and acquiring their knowledge by degrees, learned at the same time to discern the evil from the good, the born adepts of the Atlantis blindly followed the insinuations of the great and invisible "Dragon," the King *Thevetat* (the Serpent of Genesis?). Thevetat had neither learned nor acquired knowledge, but to borrow an expression of Dr. Wilder in relation to the tempting Serpent, he was "a sort of Socrates who *knew* without being initiated."

Thus, under the evil insinuations of their demon, Thevetat, the Atlantis-race became a nation of wicked *magicians.* In consequence of this, war was declared, the story of which would be too long to narrate. Its substance may be found in the disfigured allegories of the race of Cain, the giants, and that of Noah and his righteous family. The conflict came to an end by the submersion of the Atlantis; which finds its imitation in the stories of the Babylonian and Mosaic flood: The giants and magicians ". . . and all flesh died . . . and every man." All except Xisuthrus and Noah, who are substantially identical with the great Father of the Thlinkithians in the *Popul-Vuh*—the sacred books of the Guatemalans—which tells also of his escaping in a large boat, like the Hindu Noah—Vaivaswata.

Apart from natural "mediumship" there has existed, from the beginning of time, a mysterious science, discussed by many, but known only to the few. The use of "magical evocation," which formed part

of the sacerdotal office, and was believed in by all antiquity—is a longing toward our only true and real home—the after-life, and a desire to cling more closely to our parent spirit; *abuse* of it is sorcery, witchcraft, *black* magic. Between the two is placed natural "mediumship": a soul clothed with imperfect matter, a ready agent for either the one or the other, and utterly dependent on its surroundings of life, constitutional heredity—physical as well as mental—and on the nature of the "spirits" it attracts around itself. A blessing or a curse, as fate will have it, unless the medium is purified of earthly dross.

How dangerous may often become *untrained* Mediumship, and how thoroughly it was understood and provided against by the ancient sages, is perfectly exemplified in the case of Socrates. The old Grecian philosopher was a "medium"; hence he had never been initiated into the Mysteries, for such was the rigorous law. But he had his "familiar spirit" as they call it, his *daimonion.* And this invisible counsellor became the cause of his death. It is generally believed that if Socrates was not initiated into Mysteries it was because he himself neglected to become so. But the *Secret Records* teach us that it was because he could not be admitted to participate in the sacred rites, and precisely, as we state, on account of his mediumship. There was a law against the admission, not only of such as were convicted of deliberate *witchcraft* (*e.g.,* the causing of certain wicked and dangerous results to be obtained through the mesmeric power of a so-called sorcerer, who misuses his potential fiuid); but even of those who were known to have a "familiar spirit." The law was just and logical, because a genuine medium is more or less irresponsible, and the eccentricities of Socrates are thus accounted for in some degree. . . . The old sage, in unguarded moments of "spiritual inspiration," revealed that which he had never learned; and was therefore put to death as an atheist.

The Essenes had their "greater" and "minor" Mysteries at least two centuries before our era. They were the *Isarim* or Initiates, the descendants of the Egyptian hierophants, in whose country they had been settled for several centuries before they were converted to Buddhistic monasticism by the missionaries of King Asoka, and amalgamated later with the earliest Christians. And they existed, probably, before the old Egyptian temples were desecrated and ruined in the incessant invasions of Persians, Greeks, and other conquering hordes. The hierophants had their *atonement* enacted in the Mystery of Initiation ages before the Gnostics, or even the Essenes, had appeared. It

was known among the hierophants as the BAPTISM OF BLOOD, and was considered not as an atonement for the "fall of man" in Eden, but simply as an expiation for the past, present, and future sins of ignorant but nevertheless polluted mankind. The hierophant had the option of either offering his pure and sinless life as a sacrifice for his race to the gods whom he hoped to rejoin, or an animal victim. The former depended entirely on their own will. At the last moment of the solemn "new birth," the Initiator passed "the word" to the initiated, and immediately after that the latter had a weapon placed in his right hand, and was ordered to *strike*. This is the true origin of the Christian dogma of atonement.

If the study of Hermetic philosophy held out no other hopes of reward, it would be more than enough to know that by it we may learn with what perfection of justice the world is governed. A sermon upon this text is preached by every page of history. Among all there is not one that conveys a deeper moral than the case of the Roman Church. The divine law of compensation was never more strikingly exemplified than in the fact that by her own act she had deprived herself of the only possible key to her own religious mysteries. The assumption of Godfrey Higgins that there are two doctrines maintained in the Roman Church, one for the masses and the other—the esoteric for the "perfect," or the initiates, as in the ancient Mysteries, appears to us unwarranted and fantastic. They have lost the key, we repeat; otherwise no terrestrial power could have prostrated her, and except a superficial knowledge of the means of producing "miracles," her clergy can in no way be compared in their wisdom with the hierophants of old.

In burning the works of the theurgists; in proscribing those who affect their study; in affixing the stigma of demonolatry to magic in general, Rome has left her exoteric shell and *Bible* to be helplessly riddled by every free-thinker, her sexual emblems to be identified with coarseness, and her priests to unwittingly turn magicians and even sorcerers in their exorcisms, which are but necromantic evocations. Thus retribution, by the exquisite adjustment of divine law, is made to overtake this scheme of cruelty, injustice, and bigotry, through her own suicidal acts.

True philosophy and divine truth are convertible terms. A religion which dreads the light cannot be a religion based on either truth or philosophy—hence, it must be false. The ancient Mysteries were mysteries to the profane only, whom the hierophants never sought nor

would accept as proselytes. To the initiates the Mysteries became explained as soon as the final veil was withdrawn. No mind like that of Pythagoras or Plato would have contented itself with an unfathomable and incomprehensible mystery, like that of the Christian dogma. There can be but one truth, for two small truths on the same subject can but constitute one great error. Among thousands of exoteric or popular conflicting religions which have been propagated since the days when the first men were enabled to interchange their ideas, not a nation, not a people, nor the most abject tribe, but after their own fashion has believed in an Unseen God, the First Cause of unerring and immutable laws, and in the immortality of our spirit. No creed, no false philosophy, no religious exaggerations, could ever destroy that feeling. It must, therefore, be based upon an absolute truth. On the other hand, every one of the numberless religions and religious sects views the Deity after its own fashion. And, fathering on the unknown its speculations, it enforces these purely human outgrowths of overheated imagination on the ignorant masses, and calls them "revelations." As the dogmas of every religion and sect often differ radically, they cannot be *true*. And if untrue, what are they?

If the spirit, or the divine portion of the soul, is pre-existent as a distinct being from all eternity, as Origen, Synesius, and other Christian fathers taught, and if it is the same, and nothing more than the metaphysically objective soul, how can it be otherwise than eternal? And what matters it in such case, whether man leads an animal or a pure life, if, do what he may, he can never lose his individuality? This doctrine is as pernicious in its consequences as that of vicarious atonement. Had the latter dogma, in company with the false idea that we are all immortal, been demonstrated to the world in its true light, humanity would have been bettered by its propagation. Crime and sin would be avoided, not for fear of earthly punishment, or of a ridiculous hell, but for the sake of that which lies the most deeply rooted in our inner nature—the desire of an individual and distinct life in the hereafter, the positive assurance that we cannot win it unless we "take the kingdom of heaven by violence," and the conviction that neither human prayers nor the blood of another man will save us from individual destruction after death, unless we firmly link ourselves during our terrestrial life with our own immortal spirit—our GOD.

The doctrine of the possibility of losing one's soul, and hence, individuality, militates with the ideal theories and progressive ideas of some

spiritualists. They will never accept the kabalistic doctrine which teaches that it is only through observing the law of harmony that individual life hereafter can be obtained. And that the farther the inner and outer man deviates from this fount of harmony, whose source lies in our divine spirit, the more difficult it is to regain the ground. But while the spiritualists and other adherents of Christianity have little if any perception of this fact of the possible death and obliteration of the human personality by separation of the immortal part from the perishable, the Swedenborgians fully comprehend it. "Physical death, or the death of the body, was a provision of the divine economy for the benefit of man, a provision by means of which he attained the higher ends of his being. But there is another death which is the interruption of the divine order and the destruction of every human element in man's nature, and every possibility of human happiness. This is the spiritual death, which takes place before the dissolution of the body. There may be a vast development of man's natural mind without that development being accompanied by a particle of love of God, or of unselfish love of man."

The One Great Drama

Whether the hero be ridiculous or sublime, Greek or barbarian, gentile or Jew, his journey varies little in essential plan. Popular tales represent the heroic action as physical; the higher religions show the deed to be moral; nevertheless, there will be found astonishingly little variation in the morphology of the adventure, the character roles involved, the victories gained. If one or another of the basic elements of the archetypal pattern is omitted from a given fairy tale, legend, ritual, or myth, it is bound to be somehow or other implied—and the omission itself can speak volumes for the history and pathology of the example, as we shall presently see. . . . The effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world. The torrent pours from an invisible source, the point of entry being the center of the symbolic circle of the universe, the Immovable Spot of the Buddha legend, around which the world may be said to revolve.

—Joseph Campbell

THE OBSERVABLE SELF

SEEMING contradictions generally provoke thought, as, with a paradoxical statement, one instinctively rises either to deny or to affirm its truth. Yet inconsistencies in conduct—one's own conduct—pass unnoted for the most part, automatically, as it were, and there arises a tendency toward self-justification. Either one's reason or one's conscience must be satisfied, especially if there is a conflict between what seems necessary and what is morally right. Thus life is pursued in an area of overlapping confusions.

Perhaps it is "against one's principles" to go to war, let us say, yet one is "on the warpath" much of the time because there is in the nature an *oppositional tendency*: resisting suggestion, analytical to a fault, aggravating, unsettling. To increase the confusion, or make it more deceptive, a form of self-righteousness is implicit and becomes manifest. *Habitual* opposition keeps the nature turbulent. When a settled sense of frustration develops, anger arises—anger, one of the three "gates of hell, which destroy the soul," as Krishna says in *The Bhagavad-Gita.* Only "he who, while living in this world and before the liberation of the soul from the body, can resist the impulse arising from desire and anger is a devotee and blesséd."

It may be that effort is made to *resist the impulse,* each day begun in firm resolve to meet with calmness whatsoever the day brings forth. But is the cloak of calm donned like a coat of armor, a protective covering? The traditional coat of armor, heavy to carry, is inevitable reminder of the object for which it is worn. This consciousness becomes, in fact, the "chink" in the armor.

"With calmness ever present" is the true attitude of mind, but it may be likened to the apex of a pyramid: poised on its apex, the pyramid cannot stand. It needs the broad, tetragonal base—as also does the mind need the inescapable imminence of universal Law, represented in the words of Krishna "Unto thee who findeth no fault." A strange although common inconsistency of conduct is focused in the expression, "If I had my choice in the matter." YOU HAVE HAD. It is necessary to realize, not merely to say, *in all circumstances,* "this is in fact what I myself desired." A "life-long" habit must be understood—not justified, or sanctified.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Spirit Survival?

The question of survival after death is considered at length by Dr. J. B. Rhine in the *American Weekly* (Los Angeles *Examiner*) for Dec. 8. Dr. Rhine and his wife Dr. Louisa E. Rhine have for thirty-five years "been engaged in experimental research on those human powers that suggest a spiritual quality." Their primary aim from the first, Dr. Rhine states, was to "test the world-wide belief in a realm of *discarnate spirit* personalities." A series of experiments was begun in 1934 with Mrs. Eileen J. Garrett as the principal "sensitive," and a "specially devised mathematical scoring system" was set up whereby the percentage of "hits" could be determined. Thus, says Dr. Rhine—

> We could add up the total effect and see that, here in the laboratory under excellent controls, the medium had furnished a great deal of knowledge which seemed to apply to those who had come to consult her.

Incarnate or Discarnate "Spirits"?

> The big question, of course, was whether or not the information came from the spirit world. In trying to settle this question we gave Mrs. Garrett the standard ESP card tests to determine how much ability she had in telepathy and clairvoyance.
>
> The results were striking when she was in her normal state, and in a trance state, when Uvani was tested, he too was almost equally good. As a matter of fact, it was pretty well indicated that these two were basically the same personality, with at most a shade of difference, much as one differs slightly from the normal self while in a dream state or hypnotized condition.
>
> Summing up, this medium's capacity for gaining knowledge through telepathy or clairvoyance (from the sitters in the adjoining room or from other earthly sources) was so great that it could well have furnished all the information she gave in the messages. Her own belief in spirit communication would, of course, lead her unconsciously to act the part of the "communicating spirit" appropriate to each visitor.
>
> Faced with this knowledge, we had to admit we had hit a snag. In order to prove that a medium's messages came from spirit personalities we would have to be able to prove that there was no other possible way in which she could get the information.

BURDEN OF PROOF ON SPIRITS

Dr. Rhine and William Q. Judge seem to be of one mind in questioning the *value* of information received, purportedly, from the spirit world. Dr. Rhine queries: "If there are spirits, isn't there something more convincing *they* can do? Does not some of the burden of proof rest on their side of the operation?" While Mr. Judge observes, in "Communications from 'Spirits'," written in 1894 (THEOSOPHY 31: 416):

> Those "spirits" whose existence as active entities wholly in the spiritual world is claimed by the votaries of the worship of the dead, have not told us clearly anything of lasting value. They have had in America distinctly forty years to give the information in, but disagreeing among themselves and not showing in any way a concert of mental action by way of explanation, nothing has as yet resulted from the very sphere where, if anywhere, the knowledge ought to exist. If it be true, as is asserted for them, that those who have reported are conscious, intelligent spirits, then all of them who while reporting to man have failed to lead him to a right conclusion are blameworthy.

COMMUNICATION OR CLAIRVOYANCE?

Mr. Judge discusses the condition which Dr. Rhine calls a "snag," as follows:

> During the history of Spiritualism, many communications have been made to and through mediums upon many subjects. Facts have been given that could not be known to the medium, some lofty ideas have also had expression, advice has emanated, prophecies have been issued, some of the questions that vex the soul have been treated.
>
> That facts of death, kind of death, place where wills might be found have been told, unexecuted purpose of the dead expressed, personal peculiarities of the former person shown, have all been too easily accepted as proof of identity. These things are not proof. If they are, then a parrot or a phonograph may prove identity with a man. The possibilities are too many in other directions for this sort of proof to be final or even competent. The living clairvoyant may, by taking the requisite mental steps, become so absorbed in the person clairvoyantly brought up—both being alive—as to accurately reproduce all the other person's peculiarities. Consequently the same thing done in respect to a deceased may be possible in the same way for a clairvoyant entity on the other side of death reporting to us. (*Ibid.*, p. 418.)

ODDS AGAINST IDEA OF SURVIVAL

Dr. Rhine believes that the need to solve the problem of spirit-survival is urgent, because "it is fast dropping out of the range of scholarly attention." He traces this lack of interest:

The history of human thought is littered with beliefs that once held power over men's minds but, without ever having been proved or disproved, have been silently discarded by the mere withdrawal of confidence and eventually of scientific attention.

When we began our inquiries in the early '20s there were many great names in Europe and in America associated with a frank and active interest in the evidence of mediumship. All that has changed. The movement toward oblivion has gone far since the first quarter of the century.

Fresh "Break-through" Needed

The biggest factor in this loss of interest is the growth of natural science itself. In the last 50 years, more and more of the personality of man has come under the scrutiny of Science. The concept of an indivisible mind-body unity has almost, if not quite completely, been substituted for the older picture of a separable spirit that could do at least something in its own right, even with its body returned to the soil of the earth.

Therefore any scientific theory of survival today would appear to have a fantastically greater set of odds against it, in the mind of the average scientist, than it had a hundred years ago.

What we investigators most need in the years ahead is some fresh break-through into a pocket of a more clear-cut and reliable type of evidence. Otherwise, despite its importance, the whole problem may gradually move entirely off the stage of scientific attention.

"Tested" Truth of Survival Vital

Proof of survival is needed now more than ever, Dr. Rhine believes, to correct the materialistic view of man on which many "gross misconceptions about humanity" rest. Even if the truth runs counter to what has been traditionally taught, it will be better in the long run than ignorance—for "when," queries Dr. Rhine, "in all the past, has discovered truth not proved to be eventual gain?" The article concludes:

To one who has labored and pondered over this great problem for the major part of a lifetime it still offers an inviting prospect of fascinating discovery.

In the further findings that may reasonably be expected to follow from the beginnings already made, there lies, I suspect, more promise for man's genuine self-enlightenment and his high place of command in nature than in all the fantastic speculations and divergent creeds from the remotest to the most recent past.

Our traditional beliefs and aspirations have always fallen short of the true grandeur of the universe as Science has brought it into view. We can only profit by a faithful search for the facts.

PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

A chapter of this title, found in *Parapsychology—Frontier Science of the Mind,* by J. B. Rhine and J. G. Pratt, reports the investigation in the field of spirit survival on which Dr. Rhine's foregoing article rests. The authors note that "religious literature and practice have generally presented the claim that the assumed discarnate agencies can communicate with the living." In investigating this claim, attention was naturally centered on mediumistic, or séance, phenomena. Care was taken to set up conditions which would rule out, as far as possible, "fraud on the part of the medium, loose interpretation on the part of the sitter, and the use of cues or guiding information obtainable during the sessions."

EVALUATION DIFFICULT

The alternative which could not be ruled out, however, was that of "the medium's own psi capacity to acquire information either telepathically from the sitters or from other sources by means of clairvoyance." The authors continue:

> Thus far the investigation of mediumship by scientific method has not got beyond this difficulty of interpretation. There is reasonably good indication that knowledge has been obtained through mediumistic utterances that would have to be considered parapsychical in its origin. There is no way known as yet to test the hypothesis that the source of the knowledge shown is discarnate.
>
> The establishment of psi itself has naturally somewhat improved the status of the hypothesis of spirit survival. The possibility of the survival of a spiritual factor in man seems the more reasonable since the establishment of such a property in the living. At the same time, the psi investigations have to such a degree extended the possibilities of what the medium could do through her own powers that it is now not easy to see how anything which could be communicated through the medium could be proved to have been beyond her own capacities. In view of the fact that the whole conception of discarnate existence, agency, and communication, is in itself based on the assumption of parapsychical powers, we have to suppose that much the same kind and degree of such capacities would be needed for spirit communication as would be required by the medium to get the information or produce the observed effects by means of her own powers. It is in this state of ambiguity that the question of spirit survival has to be left for the present.
>
> The researches in parapsychology have, on the whole, opened a new approach to the problems of religion, problems which are of sur-

passing importance to mankind. Whether the impulse comes primarily from religionists or scientists will not matter if the pursuit of careful inquiry to these great issues is pressed with the vigor and forthrightness they deserve.

Medium's Own Powers?

By "the medium's own powers," the authors of *Parapsychology* are quite apparently assuming the psi faculty of the ordinary person in a trance, whereas the professional "medium" is a person with a peculiar physico-astral constitution. On this subject, H. P. Blavatsky states:

> It is erroneous to speak of a medium having *powers* developed. A passive medium has no power. He has a certain moral and physical condition which induces emanations, or an aura, in which his controlling intelligences can live, and by which they manifest themselves. He is only the vehicle through which *they* display their power. This aura varies day by day, and, as would appear from Mr. Crookes' experiments, even hour by hour. It is an external effect resulting from interior causes. The medium's moral state determines the kind of spirits that come; and the spirits that come reciprocally influence the medium, intellectually, physically, and morally. The perfection of his mediumship is in ratio to his passivity, and the danger he incurs is in equal degree. When he is fully "developed"—perfectly passive —his own astral spirit may be benumbed, and even crowded out of his body, which is then occupied by an elemental, or, what is worse, by a human fiend of the eighth sphere, who proceeds to use it as his own. (*Isis* I, 490.)
>
> Mediumship is literally *obsession* and *possession;* and mediums who pride themselves on being the faithful slaves of their "guides," and who repudiate with indignation the idea of "controlling" the manifestations, could not very well deny the fact without inconsistency. (*Ibid.,* 488.)

American Indian Hypnogen

The Oct. 27 issue of the *Journal* of the American Medical Association describes ceremonies of American Indians similar to those observed by Mr. Wasson (Lookout, October, 1957), but there a small spineless cactus native to northern Mexico, and parts of Texas was used instead of the wild mushroom. The active ingredient in the cactus is mescaline, which causes the same vivid, visual hallucinations as does the mushroom; indeed, the top of the cactus when dried resembles a mushroom. According to *JAMA,* "there is no soporific action, nor is there a marked general stimulation of the nervous system." The Indians

called the cactus "God's Flesh," but the Spanish missionaries of the 16th century called it "the Devil's root," because "the taking of it was said to make the Indians lazy, and did not make good Christians of them." It is possible, says *JAMA,* that "mescaline will make an important contribution, even if indirectly, to modern medicine."

LATENT POWERS OF PSYCHE

In the November 1957 *Atlantic,* Dr. Carl Jung writes on "God, the Devil, and the Human Soul." While some of Jung's elaborations are questionable from a theosophic point of view (his tolerance of the personal-God idea, for instance), he has also often contributed to the "evolving soul" psychology of which Dr. Erich Fromm is today an outstanding exponent. Jung writes:

> What our age thinks of as the "shadow" and inferior part of the psyche contains more than something merely negative. The very fact that through self-knowledge—that is, by exploring our own souls—we come upon the instincts and their world of imagery should throw some light on the powers slumbering in the psyche, of which we are seldom aware so long as all goes well. They are potentialities of the greatest dynamism, and it depends entirely on the preparedness and attitude of the conscious mind whether the irruption of these forces and the images and ideas associated with them will tend toward construction or catastrophe.

COGENT APOLOGIA

The Theosophist may object to Jung's assumption that the *professional* psychologist is the only person who has any conception of the intricacies of man's psychic nature, but at the same time respect the belief which underlies the following assertion:

> The psychologst seems to be the only person who knows from experience how precarious is the psychic preparedness of modern man, for he is the only one who sees himself compelled to seek out in man's nature those helpful forces and ideas which ever and again have enabled the individual to find the right way through darkness and danger. For this exacting work the psychologist requires all his patience; he may not rely on any traditional "oughts" and "musts," leaving the other person to make all the effort and contenting himself with the easy role of adviser and admonisher. Everyone knows the futility of preaching about things that are desirable, yet the general helplessness in this situation is so great, and the need so dire, that one prefers to repeat the old mistake instead of racking one's brains over a subjective problem. Besides, it is always a question of treating one

single individual only and not ten thousand, where the trouble one takes would be worth while, though one knows well enough that nothing has happened at all unless the individual changes.

Manasic Influence

The effect on *all* individuals, which one would like to see realized, may not set in for hundreds of years, for the spiritual transformation of mankind follows the slow tread of the centuries and cannot be hurried or held up by any rational process of reflection, let alone brought to fruition in one generation. What does lie within our reach, however, is the change in individuals who have, or create, an opportunity to influence others of like mind in their circle of acquaintance. I do not mean by persuading or preaching—I am thinking rather of the well-known fact that anyone who has insight into his own actions, and has thus found access to the unconscious, involuntarily exercises an influence on his environment. The deepening and broadening of his consciousness produces the kind of effect which the primitives call "mana."

Leavening the Lump

The tenor of the foregoing suggests the same means of progress as do these words of Robert Crosbie's:

Those who can see the course of humanity see nothing but much trouble yet for the world in general. Nothing but severe, dire disaster will make men stop and think. . . . We need to *educate,* and first of all, we need to educate ourselves. . . . Let us follow the lines of the law of our own being—compassion, love, helpfulness for all—and then we shall be able to understand ourselves and the natures of all others. Then we shall be able to help men in a way they are sometimes not aware of; we shall be able to help leaven the whole lump. . . . Though there may seem to be little action on the part of Theosophical disciples, there is much action on inner planes of being, and that action never but for the benefit of humanity.

Another Look at Religion

With Julian Huxley's "A Religious Outlook," in its September 28 issue, *Saturday Review* continues to produce articles from the best thinkers of our time. (The article is taken from Dr. Huxley's forthcoming book *Religion Without Revelation.*) Dr. Huxley cites the strides taken in bio-chemistry, technology, medicine, psychology, and suggests that "today humanity is facing the possibility of attaining its maturity. We cannot really think it tolerable that it should be faced with perpetual conflict at the central heart of its being. If our maturity

is to be stable or fully fruitful, it will be necessary for a religion of the future to be an aspect of humanity's unitary and inter-connected thought and life, not one of two opposing tendencies."

LET'S DISPENSE WITH THE WORD "GOD"

The realities of experience, says Huxley, become ordered and unified by the powers of mind into a "vital reality" which he calls the Sacred Reality. It is this reality, or various aspects of it, he believes, that men originally meant by the word "God"; but it has been obscured by the "symbolic vestures" connoted by that word. Until such time as man can throw away the evils and vestures, he says, "it is best to use some other word or phrase."

After discoursing at some length on what a religion should and should not do, Dr. Huxley concludes:

> A mature religion should definitely be a relation of the personality as a whole to the rest of the universe, one into which reverence enters, and one in which the search for the ultimate satisfaction of discovering and knowing truth, experiencing and expressing beauty, and ensuring the good in righteous action, all have the freest possible play. . . .
>
> Belief is not enough; and the sincerest religious feeling is not enough. In the long run the most devout religious spirit will do more harm than good if it is coupled with false or incomplete intellectual views, or with a rigid code of morals based on authority instead of reasoned value, or with intolerance. In the long run falsity or fixity, timidity, incompleteness, or sloth, in whatever department of the religious field, will take their revenge.

RELIGION A TWO-EDGED SWORD

> Just because religion is so powerful and universal, just because it can embrace all human faculties and actions and all aspects of the world about us, therefore it can be a potent and violent force for evil as much as for good.
>
> Once this two-edged nature of religion is recognized, its potentialities for harm faced by the religious, its potentialities for good acknowledged by the rationalist, there will be more chance of progress to a higher, forward-moving religion which helps to lead the way.
>
> An immature religion is one which does impede human faculty. A mature religion is one which is so organized that it helps to unify the diverse human faculties, and to give each of them the fullest play in a common task.

SILLY COUNTERPOINT

A ludicrous sidelight on human affairs, however, is thrown when we note that even while serious nonconformist thinkers are creatively

examining religion and its place in man's existence, more orthodox exponents of religion are making it ridiculous. In an article entitled "A Family that Prays Together Weighs Together," Gerald Weales (in the *New Republic,* March 25) pokes fun at the "candidates for the transient immortality that blossoms when popular theology is watered with good sales." While Mr. Weales jabs gently at Norman Vincent Peale (*Stay Alive All Your Life*), Dean James Pike (*How to Face Life*), and Jim Bishop (*The Day Christ Died*), the full strength of his thrust reaches Dr. Charlie W. Shedd's *Pray Your Weight Away.*

The latter book opens, says Mr. Weales, with a biographical account of how prayer and God helped Dr. Shedd to reduce, after which—

> Charlie hurries on to practical suggestions. He produces a series of how-to chapters, each one with a scriptural epigraph at the beginning and a custom-built prayer at the end (I like the one where you are asked to fill in your own excess poundage and age), which are designed to show you how God can help you reduce.

Man as God Dreamed Him

> The book, which leans heavily on the parlor psychiatry implicit in a parade of words like *neurosis, subconscious, rationalizing* and *frustration,* introduces a number of interesting theological and psychological concepts. For instance, Dr. Shedd equates excess fat with sin. In "Ask God to Show You Yourself As He Dreamed You," he tells us that God really made us all thin, except for the glandular cases, and that if our bodies are really to be temples of the Holy Spirit we had best get them down to the size God intended. . . .
>
> The exercises [outlined] will be more "meaningful" if you follow Dr. Shedd's advice and do them to the Biblical verses that he provides. "If you like this sort of thing it will not only tune you in to God but it will automatically teach you verses of Scripture . . ."

This travesty of religion would be laughable were it not so tragic a commentary on some of the "religion" of our time.

Judaism Reiterates its Stand

Leaders of Judaism in America can apparently be depended upon to take a sane and reasonable stand on matters pertaining to religious education. According to the Los Angeles *Times,* July 13, Dr. Max Nussbaum, of Temple Israel of Hollywood, credits the public schools with "contributions toward development of moral and spiritual qualities among all races and creeds." Dr. Nussbaum affirms the Jewish position:

> However we fear that public schools serving a diversified population cannot enter the realm of religion . . . without violating constitutional proscriptions and without seriously endangering the rights of all Americans to a personal choice in religious belief.
>
> We are committed to the proposition that our public schools must be kept free of sectarian strife and religious indoctrination, so that they may continue to serve as the great unifying force in American life.

PHILOSOPHICAL FALLOUT?

Just as the fallout of radioactive particles from atom bombs is to a large extent unpredictable, both as to amount and direction, so we find stray bits of ancient lore falling in the most unlikely places. For example, it has been called to our attention that the current Little Orphan Annie series in the Sunday comic section of various newspapers carries "philosophical overtones." In one sequence, Mr. Am (definitely a patriarch) gives Annie a demonstration of cycles:

> *Annie*: (holding a length of string taut between her hands): "This eternity thing. Like a line that goes back so far and forward so far, it's got no ends. But that doesn't make sense—a line's gotta have ends, like this string."
> *Mr. Am*: "Give me that string a moment—ends? I tie this string so. Now see? one line—no beginning—no end."
> *Annie*: "A circle!"
> *Mr. Am*: "Circle, cycle, exactly. Everything moves in cycles—big ones, little ones. Say this knot is today; each way stretches to eternity. *That* knot is yonder cave, half a billion years behind us."
> *Annie*: "Or maybe just *ahead* of us, eh?"
> *Mr. Am*: "How true! The cycle turns, comes full circle, and round and round, forever."

CYCLIC IMPRESSIONS AND THEIR RETURN

In a later strip, Mr. Am says that the earth has already been destroyed many times, and suggests that another time of crisis is approaching when mankind will choose either preservation or destruction. "Yet always," says Mr. Am, "in any disaster, a very few survive with nothing —to start over, slowly up, up again, bit by bit, for another half billion years. . . . It *could* happen again!"

Doubtless the full import of the suggestion of the "cyclic return of impressions" will be lost to all save those familiar with the doctrine of karmic cycles and the danger of repeating the same choices made in the past. Nevertheless, the suggestions are there.

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The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

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It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

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